



# News

SBA Number: 04-115

Release Date: September 3, 2004

For more information contact:  
Rena Carlson  
441-1081

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SBA NAMES MONTANA MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

**HELENA, MT**—John Gilbert of Silver Wolf Enterprises has been named the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 2004 Minority Small Business Person of the Year for Montana. The Minority Small Business Person of the Year Award is given each year in honor of Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week to celebrate minority business owners whose participation in federal contracting has contributed significantly to the nation's economy.

John Gilbert launched Silver Wolf Enterprises in 1998, offering Durastill water coolers and water products. Wanting to break into the government contracting arena, he applied for and was accepted into SBA's 8(a) Minority Enterprise Development Program in June of that same year. The 8(a) Program has become an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society. SBA has helped thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs over the years to gain a foothold in government contracting. Participation is divided into two phases over nine years: a four-year developmental stage and a five-year transition stage.

In 2000, Gilbert diversified his business and branched out into offering commodities for resale, and now sells everything from frozen beef to canned peas to the USDA. Gilbert was successful in being added to the GSA multiple schedules as a supplier for bungee cords, water coolers, and appliances in 2003. Since acceptance into the 8(a) Program, Gilbert has received 87 government contracts totaling nearly \$12 million.

Tiffany Korb of the Havre Small Business Development Center nominated John Gilbert for this award.

For more information about SBA's 8(a) program visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) or contact the Montana District Office at (406) 441-1081.

###